PDPAcademy 11: INSTITUTIONAL CASE STUDY

The title of your initiative:

Development of Reusable Learning Objects to Embed Graduate Attributes in Teaching and Learning

Theme(s) (NB Case Studies may straddle themes)

1. Developing and implementing a resource.   x
2. Designing/implementing and experience or intervention. x

Your Aims and Objectives (Max. 50 words)

To develop PDP-related Reusable Learning Objects (RLOs) as plug-ins to a range of modules and use them to develop an understanding of how subject content can be adapted to support the development of graduate attributes.

Your Approach(es) and Activity/ies (Short breakdown of your activities – Max. 200 words)

Background: The Ulster PDP Forum developed a 10 credit-point level 4 Certificate in Personal and Professional Development module "Reflect on Me". This module has been validated, piloted and commended for its contribution to PDP at Ulster. However, its main challenge has been uptake, many tutors citing crowded module content, controlled release points of material and check points and busy teaching schedules as a cause for its exclusion. Therefore in order to make its content more widely available and accessible to students, the project planned therefore to extract a selection of its teaching and learning activities from the module in order to convert them into RLOs.

First step: The personal response system (PRS) turning point, with a series of multiple choice questions was used and followed by student focus groups: a group within computing science and a group within spatial planning and development.   This combination of evaluation techniques along with feedback from academic colleagues in computing, management, and spatial planning provided a holistic way of evaluating the usability and impact of the module.

Second step: The data obtained was analysed and put into themes and resulted in the identification of a number of RLOs as well as the identification of a pathway for restructuring the module itself.

Outcomes so far (What is the result of your actions so far – max 100 words)

- **Intended**
  Rewriting and restructuring the module content in light of student feedback so that the tasks are more concise.
  Converting the module content into items that could be easily edited and imported into Blackboard RLO catalogue

- **Unintended**
  Delay in importing the RLOs into both Blackboard RLO catalogue and PACE due to technical and resourcing issues.

  A PDP android app has been developed which includes aspects of the 'Reflect on Me' RLO's. The possibility of developing the app so that it can 'talk' to the existing in-house PACE system will be explored during 2012/13.

Important moment(s) in the project (Max. 200 words)

Pedagogic and technical considerations have been made through consultation with colleagues in 'Access and Distributed Learning' and 'Employability and Marketing' with a view to providing a model of implementation within the University's VLE Blackboard Learn and the online employability system Professional and Career Enhancement (PACE) system. These consultations resulted in the conversions of the module content into items that could be easily edited and imported into Blackboard RLO catalogue.

Impact (including evidence of impact – max. 200 words, qualitative and quantitative indicators if possible, in respect of some or all of)

In progress, once fully uploaded onto PACE and VLE BlackBoard Learn impact will be measured.

Lessons learned (including what you might do differently on a future occasion, max. 400 words)

- Personal level.
  The project was a lot more time consuming that originally envisaged, particularly in terms of rewriting the module. I have to gain more training on the use of Blackboard

- Professional level
  It was gratifying to hear from colleagues how useful they found the activities with the Reflect on Me module

- Team level
  The team worked very well together with regular meetings and updates regarding progress. However we found that we made assumptions about students level of understanding. As a consequence we didn't realise the ambiguity that students encountered when completing individual tasks which sometimes resulted in students disengaging.

- Institutional level
  Another initiative in the University has been developed in relation to a resource for studies advice (Skills+) and is about to be launched. Only found out about this resource recently so we will have to ensure that there is no overlap or that the systems are compatible.

Your next steps (max. 150 words)

- **What will happen next?**
  A pilot carried out gathering evidence during 2012/13 using interviews and short questionnaires to staff and students on the effectiveness of the RLOs to support the development of graduate attributes.
  On completion, the models will be used to promote the development of graduate attributes across the University through its staff development and dissemination programmes.

- **What needs to happen next?**
  Uploading the RLOs onto University VLE Blackboard RLO catalogue as well as onto PACE the online employability system Professional and Career Enhancement (PACE) system. These RLOs will be made available as 'plug-ins' to be adapted to a range of subjects and levels to help direct and support studies advice meetings by end of November 2012.

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